



## Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedure

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### **1. Policy Statement**

The Westminster Society believes that all children have the right to feel safe and secure in their environment. We therefore strive to provide a safe, secure, and welcoming environment for the children and their families.

We aim to do this by thoroughly implementing this child protection and safeguarding policy, and ensuring all staff and volunteers are following the guidelines and procedures as outlined below.

Under the Children's Act 1989, all staff employed by the Society have a legal obligation to report any child abuse they may witness, suspect, or are informed of by other team members. This includes visitors in any of our services and activities delivered to the children and young people that take place within building based settings or within the family home or community. Staff employed by the Westminster Society also have a legal obligation to assist in any investigation that may take place.

### **2. What is safeguarding?**

We will work with children, parents and the community to ensure the rights and safety of children and to give the very best start in life.

Child protection is a part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. It refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.

Effective child protection is essential as part of our wider work to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. However, we aim to proactively safeguard and promote the welfare of children so that the need for action to protect children from harm is reduced.

It might be difficult to accept, but every child can be hurt, put at risk of harm or abused, regardless of their age, gender, religion or ethnicity. Safeguarding legislation and government guidance says that safeguarding means:

- protecting children from maltreatment
- preventing impairment of children's health or development
- ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- taking action to enable all children and young people to have the best outcomes.

and

“the action we take to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and families has a role to play.”

Working together to safeguard children (HM Government March 2015)

The Westminster Society is committed to reducing the risk of, and increasing the detection of safeguarding through:

- Effective staff and volunteer recruitment which ensures full pre-employment checks including references, right to work, Disclosure and Barring, fit for work and clarification of gaps in employment
- Robust values based selection and monitoring procedures
- The provision of training, raising awareness and enabling team members to use proactive approaches in the delivery of safe, respectful and responsive services
- The development of robust policies and procedures which outline good practice, adhere to the law and are commensurate with our mission and values

Where abuse is suspected the Westminster Society will provide a service, which is:

#### Prompt

In situations where there is any doubt about the child or young person immediate health, emotional wellbeing, mental health and safety.

#### Sensitive

To children and young people and their parents and families.

### Effective

In reporting, communicating and providing solutions which aim to prevent the risk of further abuse and the abuse recurring, working within a strengthening families multi-agency frame work

### Balanced

Team members must exercise responsibilities and duties appropriately, avoiding unwarranted intervention into family's lives.

### Aware

Does not discriminate against a child/young person or family member because of their religion, cultural beliefs, age, disability, gender, race, or sexuality.

We will support children, young people and their families to have access to sources of relevant information such as our Abuse is Wrong document, what to do if your worried about a child or young person and to make available in all services information on who to contact and their role if they have any concerns .

## **3. Statement on safeguarding disabled children**

Any child with a disability is by definition a 'child in need' under s17 of the Children Act 1989. Disabled children are more vulnerable to significant harm through physical, sexual, emotional abuse and / or neglect than children who do not have a disability.

The presence of multiple disabilities increases the risk of abuse and neglect.

Safeguards for disabled children are essentially the same as for non-disabled children. Particular attention should be paid to promoting a high level of awareness of the risks of harm, high standards of practice, and awareness of barriers to communication, which may make it difficult to tell others what is happening.

Where there are concerns about the welfare of a disabled child, they should be acted upon in accordance with the guidance, in the same way as with any other child.

The national guidance, '*Safeguarding Disabled Children*' – *Practice Guidance*, provides a framework of collaborative multi-agency responses to safeguard disabled children.

## **4. Safer Recruitment**

The Westminster Society will implement robust recruitment and selection procedures, deliver training and supervision, promote safe working practices, and work within the law. All staff and volunteers employed by The Westminster Society and either based in any of our building based services and / or within the community will be subject to a criminal record check through the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) prior to starting work.

A copy of this child protection and safeguarding policy will be given to each staff member during their induction process. They will be asked to sign it and hand it back to their manager, once they have read and understood the policy. All staff are also

required to attend child protection/safeguarding training as soon as possible after starting work with the Westminster Society within Children, Youth and Family Services. Each staff member will also receive yearly refresher briefings.

We are members of the safer network which is a national organisation providing safeguarding related information and resources and sharing good practise (in terms of keeping children safe) We undertake the safer network self – assessment safeguarding audit tool.

#### **5. Procedure for all team members to follow if they suspect child abuse**

All staff or volunteers must report any concerns to the Designated Safeguarding officer (Appendix 3 Safeguarding Poster - Our Commitment to Safeguarding Children) in the first instance and keep their line manager informed. If they are not available, **do not wait**, contact the On Call manager for Children, Youth and Families directly (Appendix 5 Who to Contact)

- You have witnessed any form of child abuse towards a child who attends any Children, Youth and Family Service or Society led activity or building based service or within the family home or community.
- You were informed of any form of abuse by another team member, a visitor to Society led activity or building based service or within the family home or community or by any other professional having contact with Children, Youth and Family Services
- You have witnessed something that worries you while undertaking your role as an employee of the Society about any child or young person.
- You have any concerns about abuse towards a child based on the Definitions of Abuse (Appendix 1 Definitions of Abuse)
- A child/young person has disclosed to you.

#### **6. Designated Lead for Safeguarding**

Acts as a source of support, advice, and expertise to staff on matters of safety and safeguarding and when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies and be able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referral.

**Shona Duncan - Director of Children, Youth, and Family Services** is the designated lead for safeguarding and children protection concerns within WSPLD.

**Gabby Machell - Chief Executive Officer for WSPLD** will deputise for the designated lead for safeguarding as required.

The designated lead for safeguarding takes the lead responsibility for child protection. The broad areas of responsibility for the designated safeguarding lead for Children Youth and Family Services is **Shona Duncan**.

## **7. Managing referrals**

Refer all cases of suspected abuse to the relevant local authority children's social care.

Refer to the relevant local authority designated officer (LADO) for child protection concerns (all cases that concern a staff member) following an 'allegation against a member of staff'. If because of consulting the LADO a child protection investigation is undertaken, the Westminster Society disciplinary procedures will be followed only when these investigations and any resulting actions are completed. (Appendix 7 Useful Links)

Referral (in discussion with the human resources department) to Disclosure and Barring Service (cases where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child) and/or Police (cases where a crime may have been committed).

All concerns must be passed on to Shona Duncan. In Shona's absence, contact Gabby Machell promptly and within 12 hours.

If for some reason both Shona and Gabby and the CYF Service Managers are unavailable, the team member will need to report to any other of the Westminster Society's Senior Managers.

The Westminster Society Children, Youth and Family Services Out of Hours on-call support phone number must be used if a report needs to be made outside of normal working hours (9am – 5pm Monday to Friday) and none of the above people are available). **The on call number is 020 8968 2680**

The relevant manager will ask the staff member to document all face to face or telephone conversations regarding the child; what they witnessed, observed or were told and the steps that were taken. The documentation will be recorded on the Society's incident form marked confidential, stating the facts of what was seen, observed, or heard, and should not contain any interpretation or speculation of the events and circumstances. It should be dated and signed and copies held in the child/young person's personal file and a copy sent to the designated Lead (all under password protected communication)

## **8. Training for Safeguarding Leads**

The designated safeguarding lead will receive appropriate training carried out every two years in order that:

They understand the assessment process for providing early help and intervention in the relevant Local Authority for example through locally agreed common and shared assessment processes such as early help assessments and submission of CAF and eCAFs.

They have a working knowledge of how local authorities conduct a child protection case conference and a child protection review conference and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so.

Ensure each member of staff has access to and understands the organisations child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures, especially new, sessional, part time staff and volunteers.

Only the Designated Safeguarding Lead mentioned above or the Designated Deputy will take action if a safeguarding concern is suspected. The relevant service manager will take the following steps:

- Look / Read and listen to all information from the staff member who has brought forth their concerns.
- Discuss with their line manager if appropriate, and make a decision as to whether the case should be reported to the relevant Social Services department. It is important that the manager handling the situation feels they are being supported by his/her line manager. The line manager will offer support at all times during the process, and will take responsibility for checking in with the manager handling the situation.
- Where practicable, in consultation with the social services department when they are involved, the concerns should be discussed with the child's parents, UNLESS this may either place the child at risk of significant harm.
- The manager can at any point consult with the relevant Local Authority Social Services safeguarding team about the concerns.
- If the manager decides to report the case to Social Services, they should do so as soon as possible and within 12 hours
- The manager must also document all of his/her conversations, steps taken and when and any further information gathered/observed.

**The manager will at all times follow the procedures outlined in the London Child Protection Procedures and should refer back to these procedures at any stage if needed.**

**9. If the allegation is against a member of staff:**

If an allegation is made against a member of staff within the children, youth and family services, after seeking advice a course of action will be agreed with the relevant Local Authority's Designated Officer (LADO) (or child protection advisor acting as LADO). The member of staff will initially be suspended by the Designated Safeguarding Lead or deputy, in consultation with the Director of Human Resources pending an investigation.

The Disabled Children's Team or the relevant social work team will be notified and the manager handling the situation will discuss their concerns based on the information recorded.

The parents must also be contacted and a meeting held with the parents to discuss the concerns, and subsequent actions.

All these steps will be undertaken in close liaison with the relevant LADO. All decisions and actions will be made in close liaison with The Director of Human Resources and the agreement of the LADO.

Any subsequent investigation action and will be conducted in accordance with the Society's Disciplinary Procedure

**10. If the allegation is against a member of a child's family:**

The safety of children is paramount in all decisions relating to their welfare. If there is an allegation made against a member of the child's family, the manager should seek immediate advice from the relevant Local Authority Social Services department as to what to do with the child. It may be necessary for the child to stay within the service setting after the other children have gone home, until a decision has been made by Social Services, staff should be prepared for this. The child should not be released into anyone's care until advised by Social Services. This is of particular importance when there is a serious threat to the child's safety and/or the need to protect the child from further abuse and to avoid the child being pressured by family members to not cooperate with an investigation.

Copies of all documents written by the manager, concerned staff member and any other witnesses/ involved parties will be kept on the child's record under confidential section. Further copies will be made available to Social Services, Health Services, the General Practitioner or Health Visitor and parents if required. Staff reporting this type of incident may need to be available to attend strategy meetings or a child protection conference.

It is important to remember that allegations could be made against anyone; staff, volunteers, other children, other adults, and parents/carers.

**11. Where a Child is thought to be in immediate danger**

The person who suspects a child may be in immediate danger should inform the On Call manager immediately who should always report through to the Designated Lead and then follow their protocol accordingly.

If an adult is in the Service and an allegation has been made, call the On Call manager immediately who will always report this to the Designated Lead and then follow their protocol accordingly.

If the staff member thinks that child may be at further risk of abuse on leaving the Service, they should inform the On Call manager who will always report this to the Designated Lead and then follow their protocol accordingly.

**12. Mobile Phones and Cameras**

Personal mobile phones and cameras must not be used at any time to take photographs or to make recordings of children at work either within building based, family home or in community settings. All personal phones and cameras must be put away in a separate secure place and not be carried or available for use by a worker during a session. While at work no mobile phones should be carried on a worker's person unless they are phones designated for specific use as part of the service.

### **13. Confidentiality**

All staff must agree to keep all information that they receive, confidential to the service. This means they act accordingly, e.g. following the Data Protection Act, Child Protection guidelines, The Westminster Society Confidentiality Policy, and informing other team members only if instructed to do so by the manager. The Relevant manager / Director of Children, Youth and Family Services must be informed of any information that is seen as confidential to the Service, before any further actions or decisions are made.

All staff, sessional and volunteers are not to befriend a child/young person on their own Facebook, Whats App or any other social media communication.

### **14. Appendices**

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Definitions of Abuse

Appendix 2)

Guidance on how to respond to a child / young person who has disclosed

Appendix 3)

Poster – Our Commitment to Safeguarding

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What to do if you have concerns about a child

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Contact details by area for Local Area Designated Officers

## Appendix 1

### **Definitions of Abuse taken from the London Child Protection Procedures London Child Protection Procedures - 5th edition (April 2015)**

**PHYSICAL ABUSE:** Actual or likely physical injury to a child, or failure to prevent injury (or suffering) to a child including deliberate poisoning, suffocation and Munchausen's syndrome by proxy. Female genital mutilation is a collective term for procedures that remove part or all of the external female genitalia for cultural or other non-medical reasons.

**NEGLECT:** The persistent or severe neglect of a child or the failure to protect a child from exposure to any kind of danger, including cold or starvation, or extreme failure to carry out important aspects of care resulting in the significant impairment of the child's health or development including non organic failure to thrive.

**SEXUAL ABUSE:** Actual or likely sexual exploitation of a child or adolescent. The child may be dependent and or developmentally immature.

**EMOTIONAL ABUSE:** The persistent emotional ill treatment or rejection of a child, having an adverse effect on the emotional and behavioural development. All abuse involves some emotional ill treatment. This category should be used where it is the main or sole form of abuse, cyber bullying and other forms of bullying.

#### **Staff must be alert to the initial signs of abuse**

Some initial signs of abuse may include:

##### **Physical Abuse:**

- Repeated injuries/marks on a child including bruising, scratches; welts; burn marks; broken bones; swollen and tender to touch body parts; red marks.
- Is unusually fearful;
- Sadness, anxiety, secretiveness, withdrawal without an explanation consistent with the behaviours;
- Mood changes, tantrums, aggressiveness without an explanation consistent with the behaviours;
- Unwilling to go home;
- Unwilling to undress;
- Difficulty in walking or sitting;

##### **Emotional Abuse:**

- Is seen as 'different' or 'bad' by the parents;
- Daytime wetting;
- Unwilling to go home;
- Poor Concentration;
- Low self-esteem and sense of self worth;
- Withdrawn, quiet; keeps to themselves; worried about being wrong and upsetting others, particularly adults.

**Sexual Abuse:**

- Is unusually fearful;
- Nightmares;
- Daytime wetting;
- Unwilling to go home;
- Unwilling to undress;
- Difficulty in walking or sitting;
- Sexually explicit play/language;
- Experiencing pain when going to the toilet;
- Bruising and marking to the genital and/or anal area.

**Neglect:**

- Evidence of dehydration / or malnutrition without obvious cause;
- Evidence of overall poor care;
- Is seen as 'different' or 'bad' by the parents;
- Daytime wetting;
- Poor Concentration / often very tired;
- Unwilling to go home;
- Child is often arriving at nursery hungry/thirsty and looks generally unwell often;
- Dirty clothing / hair / skin regularly etc.

**Other signs to be aware of:**

- Unexplained injuries or injuries and marks which do not have an explanation consistent with the injury/mark; with unsatisfactory or inconsistent explanations from parents/carers regarding the cause of such injuries.
- Several different explanations provided for an injury.
- Repeated presentation of minor injuries.
- Changes in the child's behaviour, emotional development which may not be consistent with current known circumstances.

**These are just some of the signs that may alert you to the fact that a child is being abused. Only one of these on their own may not indicate a child is being abused but where you find a combination of these things, alarm bells should start ringing.**

## Appendix 2

### **Guidance on how to respond to a child / young person who has disclosed**

<b><u>DO:</u></b>	<b><u>DON'T</u></b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Do treat any allegations seriously and reassure the child that you believe what they are telling you;</li><li>• Do tell the child that they did the right thing by telling you;</li><li>• Do reassure the child they are not to blame;</li><li>• Do be honest with the child about who you have to tell and why;</li><li>• Do keep the child informed about what you have done;</li><li>• Do TAKE FURTHER ACTION;</li><li>• Do write down everything that has been said, and what has been done. Write down the facts only.</li><li>• We provide support to those young people over 18- 25 if the concern is about a young adult, please follow WSPLD Safeguarding Policy and Procedure for Vulnerable Adults.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Don't make promises you can't keep e.g. don't promise that the child will never have to see the alleged person again. This is not always possible;</li><li>• Don't interrogate the child – it is not your job to carry out an investigation. This is the job of the police and social services. If you do have to ask a question, make sure it is an open-ended question;</li><li>• Don't interrupt the child or change the subject when the child starts talking to you;</li><li>• Don't cast doubt on what the child has told you. It is important that the child feels you believe them, as it has probably been very difficult for the child to tell you;</li><li>• Don't make the child feel responsible for the abuse;</li><li>• Don't do nothing – make sure you tell your nominated child protection person immediately.</li></ul>

## Appendix 3

### **Westminster Safeguarding Poster**

#### **Our Commitment to Safeguarding Children**

We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of each child and work within the framework of the Children Act 1989, the Children Act 2004 and Every Child Matters, Working Together to Safeguard Children which promotes inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children as paramount.

If you are concerned about the well being of any child or suspect that a child is being, or is at risk of being, neglected or abused physically, emotionally or sexually:

#### **Do not keep these concerns to yourself**

- Discuss them with the lead person for Safeguarding or the deputy who will advise on what further action to take.
- If we are concerned about your child we will talk to you as soon as possible unless it could affect a criminal investigation.

#### **Your designated officer for Safeguarding is:**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Job title</b>	<b>Contact numbers</b>
<b>Shona Duncan</b>	<b>Director Children, Youth &amp; Families</b>	<b>07985 353 591</b>

#### **Your deputy designated officer for Safeguarding is:**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Job title</b>	<b>Contact numbers</b>
<b>Gabby Machell</b>	<b>Chief Executive Officer WSPLD</b>	<b>07951 601 598</b>

#### **For Services Based in Westminster**

***In the event of needing advice or guidance or to raise a concern please contact:***  
WSPLD Senior Manager For Children, Youth and Family Services On-Call:  
**020 8968 2680**

Tri-borough Safer Organisations Manager / Local Authority  
Designated Officer (LADO): **Kembra Healy**

**Phone 020 7641 7668** to speak to a child protection advisor or LADO

**E-mail: [LADO@westminster.gov.uk](mailto:LADO@westminster.gov.uk)** (not secure - no confidential details)

All referrals should be made by phone call and email only for back up

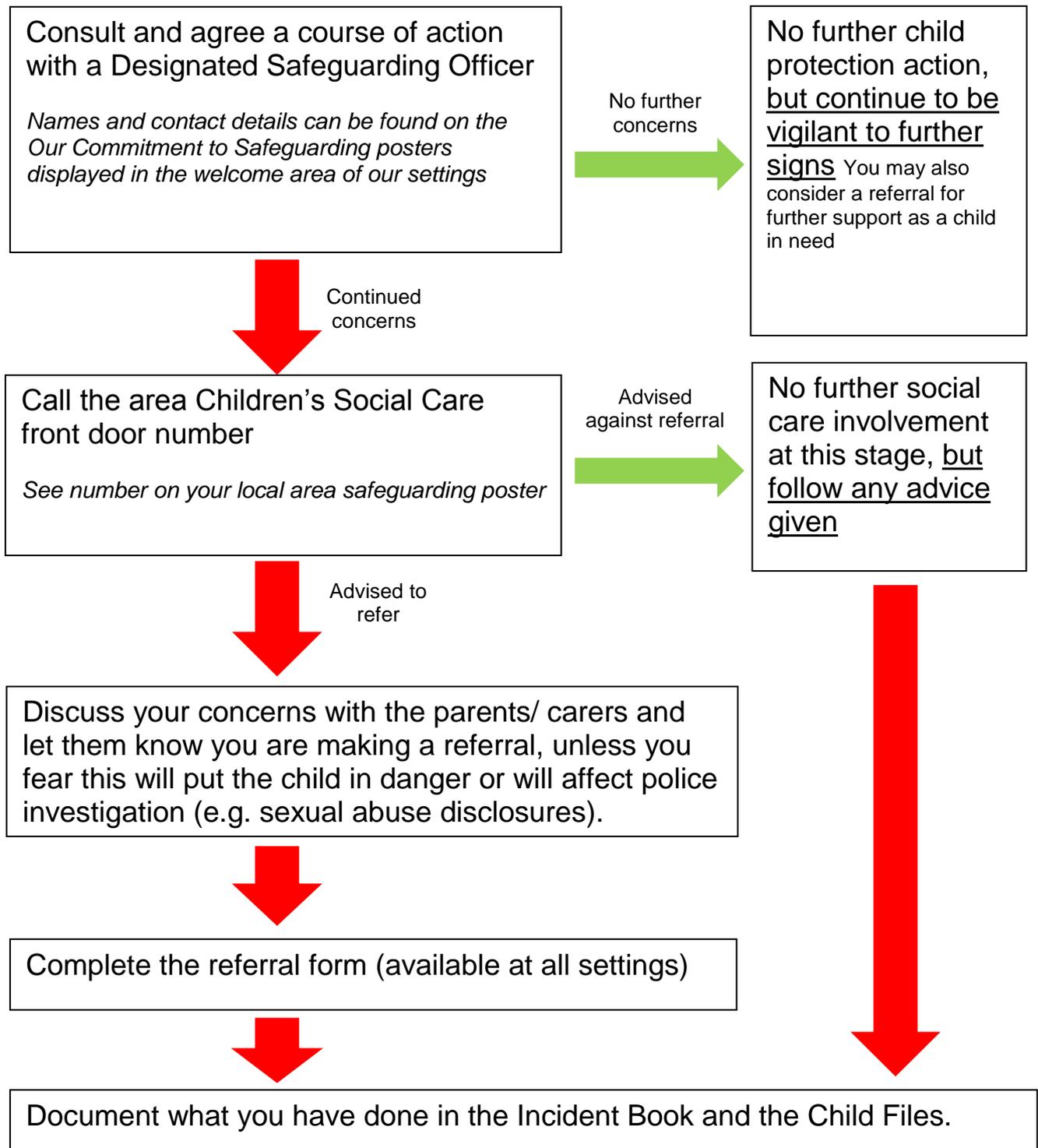
If you want to report any abuse or discuss concerns in relation to children and young people Westminster - [acesstochildreancesservices@westminster.gov.uk](mailto:acesstochildreancesservices@westminster.gov.uk) or **phone:**

**020 7641 4000**

**Ofsted: 0300 123 1231**

## Appendix 4

### What to do if you have concerns about a child:



## **Appendix 5**

### **Who to Contact in the Westminster Society**

Always go directly to the Designated Lead Officer for Safeguarding for any safeguarding concern

Shona Duncan Director of Children, Youth and Family Services  
[sduncan@wspld.org](mailto:sduncan@wspld.org) 07985 353 591

Or to the Designated Deputy Officer for Safeguarding for any safeguarding concern

Gabby Machell Chief Executive Officer  
[gmachell@wspld.org](mailto:gmachell@wspld.org) 07951 601 598

### Key Service Managers for Westminster and Islington Services

Iqbal Ali Service Manager Play and Youth Services - Westminster and Islington  
[iali@wspld.org](mailto:iali@wspld.org) 07985 234 397

Chibwe Henry Service Manager Short Breaks and Family Services – Westminster and Islington  
[chenry@wspld.org](mailto:chenry@wspld.org) 07985 234 393

Colette Harvey Service Manager – Early Years – Westminster  
[charvey@wspld.org](mailto:charvey@wspld.org) 07985 230 929

## Appendix 6

<b>Useful Links</b>	
Harrow	<a href="http://www.harrowlscb.co.uk/guidance-for-practitioners/concerns-about-a-member-of-staff-or-volunteer-who-works-with-childrenyoung-people/">http://www.harrowlscb.co.uk/guidance-for-practitioners/concerns-about-a-member-of-staff-or-volunteer-who-works-with-childrenyoung-people/</a>
Brent	<a href="http://www.brentlscb.org.uk/article.php?id=453&amp;menu=3&amp;sub_menu=17">http://www.brentlscb.org.uk/article.php?id=453&amp;menu=3&amp;sub_menu=17</a>
Westminster	<a href="https://www.rbkc.gov.uk/sharedservices/lscb/professionals/wccsafeguardingcontacts.aspx">https://www.rbkc.gov.uk/sharedservices/lscb/professionals/wccsafeguardingcontacts.aspx</a>
Islington	<a href="http://www.islingtonlscb.org.uk/key-practice-guidance/Pages/Local-Authority-Designated-Officer-(LADO).aspx">http://www.islingtonlscb.org.uk/key-practice-guidance/Pages/Local-Authority-Designated-Officer-(LADO).aspx</a>
Safer Network	<a href="http://www.safenetwork.org.uk/Pages/default.aspx">http://www.safenetwork.org.uk/Pages/default.aspx</a>
London Child Protection Procedures	<a href="http://www.londoncp.co.uk/chapters/A_contents.html">http://www.londoncp.co.uk/chapters/A_contents.html</a>

## Appendix 7

### Contact details by area for Local Area Designated Officer

#### London Borough of Westminster

- Access to Children's Services Team number 020 7641 4000
- Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) Tri-borough - Kembra Healy
- All LADO referrals go through Westminster Child Protection Advisors team first phone: 020 7641 7668
- Email: [LADO@westminster.gov.uk](mailto:LADO@westminster.gov.uk) - See new referral form.
- Emergency duty out of Hours 020 7641 2388

#### London Borough of Harrow

- Children's Access Team Golden number **020 8901 2690**
- Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) - Janice Miller
- Email : [Janice.Miller@harrow.gov.uk](mailto:Janice.Miller@harrow.gov.uk)
- Contact on **020 8736 6435** (Monday, Tuesday and Fridays only, otherwise ring Golden number)
- Emergency duty out of Hours **020 8424 0999**

#### London Borough Of Brent

- Brent Front Door for CP referrals:- **020 8937 4300**
- Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) -Deborah Paton
- Contact on **020 8937 4838** or **07880 088 343**
- Email: [deborah.paton@brent.gov.uk](mailto:deborah.paton@brent.gov.uk)
- Emergency duty out of hours: **020 8863 5250**

#### London Borough Of Islington

- Children's Services contact team **020 7527 7400**
- Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) Laura Eden
- Email: [LADO@islington.gov.uk](mailto:LADO@islington.gov.uk)
- Or call **020 7527 8102**
- Emergency duty out of hours **020 7226 0992**

**STAFF MUST NOT DISCLOSE INFORMATION TO ANY OTHER MEMBER OF  
STAFF CONFIDENTIALITY IS PARAMOUNT.**

Please sign below once you have read and understood these guidelines.

I ..... (name) agree to follow the guidelines outlined in this child protection/safeguarding policy at all times when working for the Westminster Society.

I agree to maintain confidentiality.

Signed: ..... Date.....

Print Name: .....

***Review of policy***

<b>Date of last review</b>	February 2017
<b>Date of next review</b>	February 2018
<b>Date it was first implemented</b>	August 2008
<b>Author(s)</b>	Director of Children, Youth and Family Services
<b>Audience</b>	All employees .trustees and volunteers